

Prevention Redesign Initiative

Washington State
Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery

Wenatchee, Washington

Wenatchee TOGETHER!

DEMOGRAPHICS:

Wenatchee is the largest city in the region with a strong economic base from agriculture, manufacturing and tourism. According to the 2008 Wenatchee Urban Comprehensive Plan, 29,320 people live within the city limits. Over 21% of the city's population and 30% of the school districts population are of Hispanic or Latino descent. The population of Wenatchee is expected to grow by 17,000 residents over the next 20 years. Geographical limitations lend this growing population to higher density housing. Wenatchee is currently ranked 12th in terms of people per square mile for all cities in Washington State.

According to community indicators provided by the Chelan Douglas Trends Network, the median household income for the area, currently at \$42,000, has been steadily decreasing since 2005 and remains below the National average. A further indicator of the poverty issues facing youth and their families in Wenatchee is the number of youth who qualify for free and reduced lunch. According to Chelan Douglas Trends 53% of Chelan County students qualify. This represents a gain of nearly 32% since 1999.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW:

Chelan-Douglas TOGETHER! for Drug Free Youth is a private nonprofit that mobilizes communities to prevent substance abuse and violence. TOGETHER's Wenatchee Coalition has been active since 1990. Awarded a SPF-SIG grant in 2004 for Orchard Middle School, they built a school-community partnership to address underage drinking. Strategies included parenting classes, youth outreach, and an intensive social norms campaign. According to 2008 Healthy Youth Survey results, Wenatchee experienced a significant increase in parents talking with youth about alcohol, and a significant decrease youth in initiating alcohol use. Determined to build on this initial achievement, the Wenatchee Youth Substance Abuse Coalition is pleased to serve as Cohort 1 for Chelan County under the Prevention Redesign Initiative.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

In December 2009 over 300 community members participated in three Town Hall meetings over a three-month period. Participants represented Wenatchee School District, Wenatchee Police Department, Chelan County Sheriff's Department, medical providers, social service agencies, the faith community and elected officials, including our State Senator. Youth and parents were active participants in these meetings, as they are on the Coalition itself.



Wenatchee Youth Substance Abuse Coalition

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Community Coordinator

Renee Hunter

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Renée Hunter has served as Executive Director of Chelan Douglas Together for Drug Free Youth since its inception in 1990. In that time she has established eleven community coalitions and mobilized hundreds of volunteers to implement evidence-based prevention strategies. Renée serves on several state committees and is the recipient of numerous awards, including the 2001 Governor's Award for Collaboration.

Other PRI Contacts

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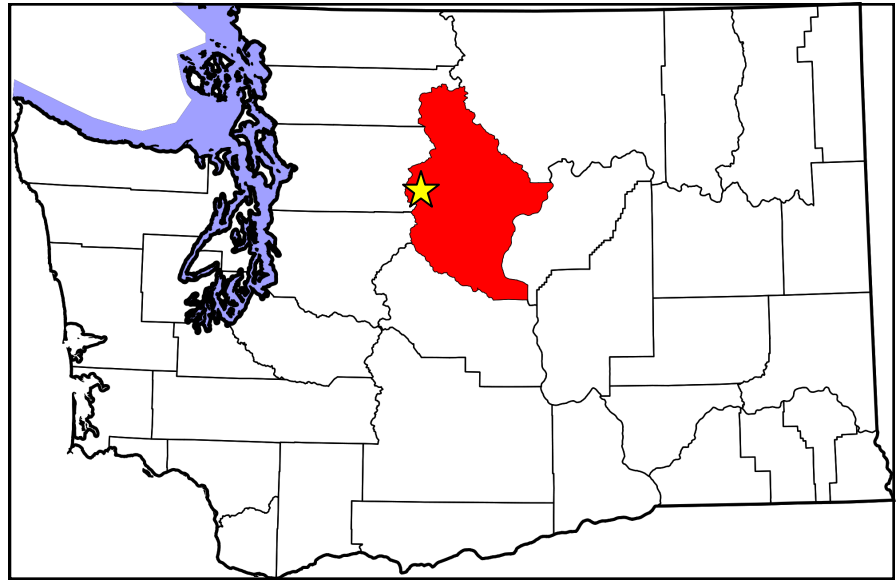
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Chelan County, Washington



Community Profile

Highlights of Local Problems:

2008 Healthy Youth Survey data show Wenatchee 8th graders have higher rates than the statewide average for 30 day alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use, and for binge drinking. Results of the 2010 Healthy Youth Survey showed a statistically significant decrease in 8th grade alcohol use, although still higher than the state average. Wenatchee 10th graders were higher than the state average in all of the above except tobacco use.

Contributing Conditions:

High poverty rates contribute to a high-risk environment for Wenatchee youth. The entire central portion of the state has always been the poorest region and the economic crisis has magnified the problem. Wenatchee ranks third in the state for homelessness; 65% of births are paid by Medicaid; 55% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch, and 20% of Chelan County children live below poverty level. Additionally, there is an identified community norm that expects and tolerates problem behaviors. Funding for school and community based prevention has diminished over the last decade, with a significant loss in 2010 with the end of the federal Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities program.

Summary of Prevention Program:

- **Program Goals:** decrease risks associated with community norms, antisocial behavior, family management problems and favorable attitudes towards problem behavior.
- **Evidence-based Programs:** Life Skills, Second Step, Project Alert, Strengthening Families, Love and Logic
- **How progress will be measured:** Healthy Youth Survey results, Pre-and-post parent and youth surveys
- **Anticipated challenges and resolutions:** Budget and staff reductions remain the biggest challenge, with an additional challenge being to effectively reach migrant/bi-lingual families. Resolutions include mobilizing volunteers, engaging the business community and other community partners, and delivering bi-lingual/bi-cultural services to Hispanic families.

Our Mission:

“To prevent youth substance abuse by encouraging and supporting responsible student choices, a safe school environment, family involvement and community commitment.”

Statistics

Community: Chelan

Population: 31,925

Zoning: Rural

Ethnic Diversity
36% Hispanic student enrollment

Median Household Income: \$42,000

Coalition Founded: 1990